

Silence Kills. Why talking about addiction should be ‘the norm’ in workplace conversation

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Alcohol, unlike other drugs is legal, socially accepted and widely encouraged. It seems that the glamour associated with alcohol overshadows the fact that it continues to be “... the leading risk factor for ill health, early mortality and disability and the fifth leading risk factor for ill health across all age groups.” (<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7626/CBP-7626.pdf>)

Today marks the start of Alcohol Awareness Week, which makes for an especially busy week for the team at Brighton-based marketing, tech and publishing company Citrus Ornge, who’s social mission, (<https://www.citrusornge.com/our-social-mission/>) is to create opportunities for those recovering from addiction and it sits right at the heart of their business. Citrus’s CEO, Jason Baker, doesn’t shy away from difficult conversations and wants workplaces to normalise talking about the issues surrounding addiction and support those in recovery.

Mr Baker said “The challenge of addiction changed my life and I know how difficult it is to get your life back together while in recovery. I’m concerned that addiction is a silent issue in the workplace. It should be a topic that is openly discussed in-line with the movement towards mental health first aid in the modern workplace.”

“Every day, 20 people die as a result of their drinking. But alcohol harm is not inevitable.” AlcoholChange.org.uk (<https://alcoholchange.org.uk/>)

Shifting the cultural norms associated with addiction and recovery opens up a safe space for those who may be too scared to either approach a colleague about their own personal concerns around their drinking or even ‘come out’ as a recovering addict within the workplace. By creating a space to talk more freely about alcohol addiction we enable people to build their confidence and ability to help improve their own drinking behaviours.

Addressing addiction more freely in the workplace gets people to talk more openly about balancing the spectrum of drinking cultures that sit within our society.

Citrus Ornge are excited to be launching the first of their brand-new, business-led Q&A series ‘Answering the Difficult Questions’ with Ali Hannon, Brighton-based Diversity and Inclusion speaker, trainer and activist. The first of their online series ‘Addiction and Mental Health in the workplace’ takes place on Thursday 9th December, 12:00-13:30. This is a great opportunity for businesses to tune in and receive some insight into how they can make their workplaces more inclusive and how doing so can massively benefit your business.

Tickets are FREE, you just need to register here by 5pm, Wednesday 8th December. (<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/addiction-and-mental-health-in-the-workplace-tickets-209825251977>)

Ali commented: “Getting people talking about subjects like these saves lives. Many leaders don’t know

where to even begin with these conversations, though. Those living with addiction face several obstacles in the workplace and creating inclusive cultures means getting to grips with the reality of addiction. As someone who grew up around addiction, I know that talking about it is the first step to breaking patterns of behaviour.”

Citrus Ornge’s Social Mission is a progressive charge in the fight against the stigma that surrounds addiction. Since their launch in 2018, they’ve: Grown their core team with a current size of approximately 13 staff members, helped 15 people through their social mission to achieve permanent full or part-time work as key members of staff, board members or freelancers and recently relocated into their own office space, right in the centre of Brighton’s quirky and trendy South Laines. Citrus’s White paper (<https://www.citrusornge.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Citrus-Ornge-White-Paper-Sept-2021.pdf>) came together to help develop further their incredible Social Mission and his team can help your business to create a social mission of your very own.

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About Citrus Ornge

Citrus Ornge is a specialist performance marketing, technology and publishing business who are experts in high-end B2B and B2C lead generation. We provide bespoke digital marketing products aimed at your customers. We know exactly where your customers are and how best to reach them. Further information can be found at www.citrusornge.com. (<https://www.citrusornge.com/>)

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About Ali Hannon

Ali Hannon is a trainer and consultant who helps organisations transform their culture, by supporting them in their equality, diversity and inclusion journey.